

REMARKS

If the Examiner has any questions concerning the amendment or the above-identified application in general, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned so as to expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment to Preliminary Amendment dated June 15, 2001

Marked-up Claims 6-8, 10-13 and 15

6. (Amended) A process according to [any one of claims 1-5] claim 1, in which the polysaccharide containing acidic groups contains 0.3-3.0 carboxyl groups per monosaccharide unit.

7. (Amended) A process according to [any one of claims 1-6] claim 1, in which said cross-linking agent is a bis-epoxy compound, and the polysaccharide is acidified before step (a).

8. (Amended) A process according to [any one of claims 1-7] claim 1, in which said crosslinking step is performed at a temperature of at least 100°C, preferably between 120 and 180°C and/or at a concentration of the polysaccharide of between 25 and 75% by weight.

10. (Amended) A process according to [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, in which said drying step (d) is performed using a fluidised bed, at a temperature of between 50 and 130°C.

11. (Amended) A process according to [any one of the preceding claims], in which said drying step (d) is followed by a heat treatment at a temperature of between 80 and 150°C.

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Marked-up Claims 6-8, 10-13 and 15

12. (Amended) A process according to [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, in which an additional surface-crosslinking step is performed after step (c) or after step (d).

13. (Amended) Superabsorbent polysaccharide derivative obtainable by the process according to [any one of the preceding claims] claim 1, and having a pH below 5.

15. (Amended) Absorbent article comprising a superabsorbent polysaccharide according to claim 13[or 14].